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SELECTED HEALTH DATA FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN OF
NORTH CAROLINA'S HEALTH SERVICE AREAS

For the state and the state's six health service areas (HSA's), the State Center for Health Statistics has previously reported the health-related results of three North Carolina Citizen Surveys (NCCS's) conducted by the Office of State Budget and Management (1-3). Continuing that practice, and in accordance with an agreement with the State Health Planning and Development Agency to report such data for HSA's, this report presents findings from the Fall 1981 NCCS.

That survey included fewer health questions than have previous ones, and the questions asked were generally different from those of the past. In particular, the survey instrument excluded questions on health conditions but included new questions concerning the health care resources of children and the water supply and sewage characteristics of household living quarters.

Households were surveyed by telephone or in person with a small percentage reached by mail. Other details concerning survey design and methodology of the NCCS have been reported (1-4).

Examination of the 1981 sample indicates it generally reflects the composition of the state's adult population although, as in the past, persons aged 30-64 appear overrepresented to some extent. On the other hand, whites accounted for 72 percent of the sample compared to 78 percent of the 1980 Census count of persons 18 and older.

Altogether, 1,377 household interviews were completed in the Fall of '81, these drawn from a sampling frame that represented 94 percent of North Carolina households in 1980. Sample sizes for HSA's are given in Table 1 (adults), Table 2 (households with children 0-17) and Table 5 (all households). Users should also note that, in all cases, percentages in this report are based on denominators that exclude unknowns, don't knows, etc. Such treatment assumes that those respondents were distributed like the knowns, which may not be realistic in all cases. However, missing data was not a large problem in this survey.

Health Care Resources

Adult respondents were asked about health care availability and health insurance coverage for themselves, and separately, for any children (ages 0-17) in the household (Tables 1 and 2). Statewide, 86% of adults had a usual source of health care and 96% of households with children had one or more usual providers of care for children, most often a doctor in private practice. Among providers reported, a public health department was named for 4% of adults* and, relative to children's providers, 7% of households with children. Users of health departments were most often nonwhite, of low to medium income/education and from larger households. Young adults (18-29) were more apt to use health departments than were older adults. Eastern adults and Western, Cardinal and Eastern children used health departments far more than others.

*While this appears to be an increase over previous estimates, the corresponding questions in prior surveys were worded differently and estimation procedures have changed somewhat. Thus, comparisons over time are tenuous at best.